

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

EB-07 SAJ-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00 COME-00 /075 W

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R 161604Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0149

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US, WB

SUBJECT: FRENCH DENIAL OF PERMITS FOR BERLIN ORIGIN
CHARTERS

1. SUMMARY: GOF HAS DENIED LANDING AUTHORITY AT PARIS FOR A NUMBER OF PAA AND LAKER BERLIN ORIGIN CHARTERS. FRENCH MEASURE TOOK EFFECT IMMEDIATELY WHERE LAKER WAS CONCERNED BUT PERMITTED PAA TO CONTINUE ITS CHARTERS THROUGH MAY 19. UK RAISED MATTER IN PARIS WITHOUT SUCCESS. WE HAVE DISCUSSED MATTER IN CAA FORUM, URGING THE FRENCH TO RE-CONSIDER. GOF LATER APPROVED TWO ADDITIONAL PAA CHARTERS; HOWEVER, THE SITUATION REGARDING FALL PARIS PROGRAM REMAINS UNCERTAIN. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE MATTER HERE WORKING WITH FRENCH CAA. END SUMMARY.

2. PAA DIRECTOR RUNNETTE HAS INFORMED US THAT THE GOF HAS DENIED LANDING AUTHORITY FOR PREVIOUSLY CLEARED PAA BERLIN ORIGIN INCLUSIVE TOUR CHARTERS ON MAY 22, 25, AND 29. THE GOF'S EXPLANATION FOR THE ACTION WAS THAT THERE IS PRESENTLY ENOUGH CAPACITY ON SCHEDULED SERVICES TO HANDLE THE DEMAND FOR BERLIN - PARIS TRAVEL. UK CAA
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TOLD US THAT THE GOF HAS ALSO DENIED LANDING AUTHOR-

ITY TO A NUMBER OF LAKER AIRWAYS CHARTER FLIGHTS PLANNED FOR MAY. THE SITUATION WAS SOMEWHAT MORE DIFFICULT FOR LAKER, SINCE IN ONE CASE THE AIRLINE HAD CARRIED A GROUP TO PARIS AND FOUND ITSELF UNABLE TO FLY THE RETURN LEG OF THE CHARTER. A FRENCH SUPPLEMENTAL TOOK THE GROUP BACK TO BERLIN ON A SUB-CHARTER BASIS AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT AIR FRANCE'S CHARTER SUBSIDIARY HAS PICKED UP THE REMAINING LAKER FLIGHTS SCHEDULED THIS MONTH.

3. GROVES REPORTED FURTHER THAT THE UK EMBASSY AT PARIS HAD RAISED THE MATTER ON AN URGENT BASIS WITH THE GOF WITHOUT SUCCESS. UK DEPT. OF TRADE HAD REACTED FORCEFULLY, AND HAD SUGGESTED TO THE UK EMBASSY HERE THAT FRG AUTHORITIES BE BRIEFED AND ENCOURAGED TO INTERVENE WITH THE FRENCH. WE TOOK A STRONGLY NEGATIVE VIEW OF THIS COURSE, ARGUING THAT PREMATURE AIRING OF THE PROBLEM COULD CREATE CONSIDERABLE UNFORTUNATE PUBLICITY AND MAKE MATTERS WORSE WITH THE FRENCH. GROVES SAID HIS EMBASSY AGREED AND WAS ATTEMPTING TO HAVE THE FCO WITHDRAW THE INSTRUCTIONS WHICH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ACCOMPLISHED. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PROBLEM WOULD INITIALLY BE HANDLED IN THE CAA FORUM IN ORDER TO DETERMINE IF THERE WAS ANY GIVE IN THE GOF'S POSITION.

4. AT A SUBSEQUENT CAA MEETING FRENCH CAA LASSUS (WHO HAD GRANTED CORRIDOR CLEARANCE FOR ALL THE AFFECTED FLIGHTS) SAID HE WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEM AND WOULD HAVE TO QUERY PARIS FOR FURTHER DETAILS. DURING THE DISCUSSIONS GROVES AND US ASST CAA EXPRESSED REGRET THAT ONE OF THE ALLIED GOVERNMENTS WAS APPARENTLY TAKING A RESTRICTIVE POSITION TOWARD BERLIN ORIGIN FLIGHTS. UK CAA GROVES POINTED OUT THAT BRITISH CIVIL AIR AUTHORITIES HAD APPROVED BERLIN CHARTERS TO LONDON BY PAA OVER THE PROTESTS OF SEVERAL BRITISH SUPPLEMENTALS. SINCE ALLIED GOVERNMENTS HAVE ASKED OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO GIVE SPECIAL TREATMENT TO BERLIN FLIGHTS, THE RECENT FRENCH ACTION SEEMED INCONSISTENT WITH OUR GENERAL APPROACH TO BERLIN CIVIL AIR MATTERS. MOREOVER, IT APPEARED THAT CHARTERS WERE AIMED AT A DIFFERENT MARKET SECTOR THAN AIR FRANCES'S SINCE EVEN ITS PROMOTIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FARES WERE NOT COMPETITIVE WITH THE IT PACKAGE OFFERED BY LAKER AND PAA.

5. FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH PAA INDICATED THAT THEIR AGENT HAD FULLY BOOKED CHARTERS THROUGH MAY 25, AND HAD DECIDED TO DIVERT EARLIER PLANNED CHARTERS ON MAY 29, JUNE 5 AND 8, TO OTHER DESTINATIONS. THUS GOF APPROVAL FOR FLIGHTS ON MAY 22 AND 25 WAS VITAL, PARTICULARLY

AS REGARDS MAY 22, SINCE PASSENGERS BROUGHT TO PARIS ON THE 19TH WOULD BE STRANDED UNLESS PAA WENT TO THE EXPENSE OF ARRANGING A SUB-CHARTER. IF THE PROBLEM WAS NOT RESOLVED BY MAY 14, THE AGENT THREATENED TO MAKE A PRESS STATEMENT IN ORDER TO INFORM THE FULLY TICKETED PASSENGERS THAT THEIR FLIGHTS HAD TO BE CANCELLED BE-

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CAUSE OF GOF ACTION. BY WAY OF ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND PAA OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT THIS AGENT HAD HAD CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING ENOUGH SPACE ON AIR FRANCE'S SCHEDULED SERVICES AT THE CONCESSIONARLY "CULTURAL FARE". HE THEREFORE APPROACHED PAA PROPOSING A SERIES OF CHARTERS FROM MARCH THROUGH JUNE 1975 AND SEPT. THROUGH NOV. 1975.

6. EMB ASST CAA CONTACTED LASSUS IMMEDIATELY, URGING THAT HE ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE PARIS TO GRANT LANDING AUTHORITY FOR PAA'S MAY 22 AND 25 FLIGHTS IF ONLY TO AVOID A PUBLIC AIRING OF THE SITUATION. WE MADE IT

CLEAR THAT WE WOULD WISH TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF PAA'S FALL PARIS PROGRAM LATER. LASSUS -- WHO WAS SOMEWHAT CONCERNEDSE BY PARIS' PRECIPATE ACTION -- PROMISED TO DO HIS BEST TO PERSUADE THE QUAI TO INTER- VENE. HE CALLED BACK TO REPORT THAT BOTH AIR FRANCE/FRANKFURT AND THE QUAI FAVORED RE-APPROVING PAA'S FLIGHTS; HE WAS THEREFORE CONFIDENT THE MATTER WOULD BE RESOLVED SATISFACTORILY. PAA TOLD US SHORTLY AFTERWARDS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT ITS PARIS OFFICE HAD RECEIVED CLEARANCES FOR MAY 22 AND 25 AND THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR APPROVAL OF A FALL PROGRAM WERE REASONABLY GOOD.

7. COMMENT: WE INTEND TO PURSUE THIS QUESTION QUIETLY WITH LASSUS, STRESSING THAT OUR INFORMATION SUGGESTS AIR FRANCE CANNOT PROVIDE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF LOW COST SEATS TO MEET THE DEMAND, AS WELL AS THE POINTS MENTIONED PARA 2 ABOVE. SINCE PAA'S AGENT HAS SHOWN AN INCLINATION TO DIVERT HIS BUSINESS TO DESTINATIONS OTHER THAN PARIS, WE HOPE THE FRENCH MIGHT BE MOTIVATED TO TAKE A MORE FORTHCOMING VIEW OF PAA'S FALL PROGRAM. IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE BRITISH HAVE GIVEN UP ON LAKER'S MAY AND JUNE PROGRAM BUT MAY, OF COURSE, BE INTERESTED IN PICKING UP THE BUSINESS AGAIN LATER IN THE YEAR. WE UNDERSTAND FROM GROVES LAKER'S CASE WAS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT ONE OF ITS FLIGHTS ARRIVED IN PARIS WITHOUT PRIOR LANDING AUTHORITY.

8. THE ABOVE WAS DRAFTED BEFORE RECEIPT OF STATE 112553. HILLENBRAND

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